Christian Children’s Book “No Shoes Petra”: A tool for reflection

OVERVIEW

This Christian children’s Book, No Shoes Petra, is about a little girl who does not have any shoes. The book keenly illustrates an instance of someone meeting the need of the little girl (Petra) by providing a pair of new shoes. This simple example will lead us to the question “What can I do?” on Orphan Sunday since, as Christians, we are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. Our starting point is being aware of how greatly we are blessed. The exercise below is designed to cultivate that awareness. In the book, Petra comes to this awareness with the help of her grandmother.

PREPARATION

1. Get the book No Shoes Petra through Barnes & Noble or Amazon (see details below).
2. Please photocopy the cover page and the last two pages of the book. The last two pages have designated areas for children to draw or write. Make at least one photocopy for each student in the class. Staple together all three pages.
3. Ensure an adequate number of pencils and coloring pencils/crayons are available to accommodate the group.

EXERCISE and DISCUSSION

1. Read the book to the class. To add visuals, the book’s pages should be put on a larger screen while the reading occurs. If the class is small and all the children can easily see the reader, then the images inside the book can be shown directly to the children.

2. After the book has been read, the leader will ask for a volunteer to summarize the story.

3. The leader will then ask for two other volunteers to give their impression as to what is the key message of the story.

   The answer could be wide-ranging; therefore, many thoughts should be accommodated. For example, one child succinctly said that the story tells us that no matter what your circumstances are, Jesus is with you. Others may tell you about their own circumstance at school when they did not have all they needed or when they were bullied. One girl explained how her grandmother told her (just as in the book) she had only one uniform to wear when she was going to school.
4. All three pages will be distributed to each child. The children will be asked to either draw or write one or more blessings on these pages.

5. After twenty minutes or so, each child will be asked to show its drawing or to share with the class what they are thankful for.

   *Usually the majority of the class is willing to do this. For those who are shy, just ask if they want someone else to present their work to the class.*

6. After each presentation, the leader will applaud for the child and provide a short prayer of thanksgiving for what was spoken. For example, if a Jane says I am thankful for the food that I have, the leader echoes that in a prayer that offers a thank you for providing Jane with food every day.

7. After everyone has spoken, the leader can remind the children how good God is.

   *Petra (main character in the book) did not have shoes, but she had many other things. Some things were obvious and some were less so. Orphans do not have parents, but the Lord is still with them. That is why we celebrate Orphan Sunday. We take this time to touch these children in one way or another in order for them to also see how good God is. WE CAN BE THE MIRACLE THAT SOMEONE IS PRAYING FOR.*

**ACTION**

What we can all do is pray for orphans in our neighborhood, in our country and around the world. The leader may opt to inform the class of what their church will do to support orphans. The leader can decide to purchase a copy of the book for children nearby growing up in foster care or others that face life without their fathers and/or mothers; for social workers and officials serving foster youth; or for churches and non-profits with adoption/foster/global orphan ministries.

Purchase the book here:

https://www.amazon.com/No-Shoes-Petra-Donna-Clarke/dp/1770698000/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1505436884&sr=8-1&keywords=no+shoes+petra

https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/no-shoes-petra-donna-clarke/1117442575?ean=9781770698000